

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 TEL AV 01030 01 OF 02 240229Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 HA-05 SSM-03
TRSE-00 ACDA-12 /091 W
-----113265 240248Z /70

O 240150Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 788
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 1030

E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV PINT IS EG XF
SUBJ: KNESSET DEBATES PEACE TALKS

1. IN A FOREIGN POLICY DEBATE INITIATED BY THE GOVERNMENT,
THE KNESSET LAST NIGHT (JAN 23) HEARD PRIME MINISTER BEGIN
DEFEND HIS HANDLING OF THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS AND THE CABINET
DECISION TO DEFER SENDING A DELEGATION TO THE MILITARY COMM-
ITTEE TALKS. THE FIVE AND A HALF HOUR SESSION CONCLUDED WITH
A VOTE IN SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT 59 TO 9 (RAKAH, SHELLI
AND TWO MAPAM MKS), WITH 19 ABSTENTIONS (THE ALIGNMENT PLUS
LIKUD MKS MOSHE SHAMIR AND GEULA COHEN WHO BROKE STRICT
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 TEL AV 01030 01 OF 02 240229Z

PARTY DISCIPLINE BY ABSTAINING). A RAKAH NO CONFIDENCE MOTION
WAS OVERWHELMINGLY DEFEATED (90 TO 5), AS WAS A SHELLI
MOTION ATTACKING THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION. ALSO
DEFEATED WAS AN ALIGNMENT MOTION EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR
JORDAN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE PEACE TALKS AND CRITICIZING
ACTION AND STATEMENTS HARMFUL TO THE NEGOTIATIONS.

2. MUCH OF BEGIN'S 75-MINUTE SPEECH WAS A REVIEW OF ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN DISCUSSIONS AND NEGOTIATIONS SINCE SADAT ARRIVED IN JERUSALEM. BEGIN'S DELIVERY WAS UNEMOTIONAL AND GENERALLY LOW-KEY. HE DEVOTED MORE OF HIS ADDRESS TO THE SINAI AND BILATERAL ISSUES THAN TO THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION. BEGIN CLAIMED THAT IN JERUSALEM SADAT HAD AGREED THAT THE EGYPTIAN ARMY WOULD NOT CROSS THE SINAI PASSES. THIS UNDERSTANDING WAS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN THE PEACE PLAN PREPARED BY BEGIN AND PROPOSED AT ISMAILIA. HOWEVER IN TALKS WITH SADAT AND GAMASY, WEIZMAN WAS PRESENTED WITH A DEMILITARIZED LINE ONLY 40 KMS FROM THE 1967 BORDER. BEGIN RECITED THE PRINCIPLES WHICH HE SAID HE AND SADAT HAD INITIALLY AGREED ON AT ISMAILIA, BEFORE SADAT'S ADVISERS INTERCEDED PREVENTING FINAL AGREEMENT.

3. BEGIN'S ONLY LAPSE INTO EMOTION WAS WHEN HE REVIEWED THE RECENT ATTACKS ON HIMSELF AND ON JEWS BY THE EGYPTIAN PRESS. HE QUOTED EXTENSIVELY FROM DEROGATORY ARTICLES AND DWELT AT LENGTH ON THE SHYLOCK SLUR. BEGIN ALSO REFERRED TO SADAT'S MOST RECENT INTERVIEW IN THE MAGAZINE "OCTOBER" AND STATED THAT SADAT HAD SAID TO HIM IN JERUSALEM, "YOU ARE MY FRIEND." BEGIN ASKED RHETORICALLY, "IS THIS THE SAME SADAT?"

4. BEGIN WAS MILDLY CRITICAL OF SADAT'S JAN 21 SPEECH AND DEFENDED HIS TOAST AT THE JAN 17 DINNER FOR THE EGYPTIAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 TEL AV 01030 01 OF 02 240229Z

DELEGATION. OTHER POINTS MADE BY BEGIN: HE INFORMED SADAT AT ISMAILIA THAT ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN SINAI WOULD HAVE TO REMAIN; SADAT SAID NOTHING ABOUT AGREEMENT TO THEIR REMOVAL AS A CONDITION FOR CONTINUING TALKS. FOLLOWING A WAR OF SELF-DEFENSE TERRITORIAL CHANGES ARE LEGITIMATE. IN THE ABSENCE OF A PEACE TREATY, NO ISRAELI SOLDIER WILL MOVE FROM HIS PRESENT POSITION. FINALLY, BEGIN SAID THE DECISION TO POSTPONE SENDING THE ISRAELI DELEGATION WAS TAKEN BECAUSE OF THE PRESENT UNFAVORABLE ATMOSPHERE, BUT THE DOOR REMAINS OPEN FOR A CONTINUATION OF TALKS.

5. OPPOSITION LEADER SHIMON PERES WAS CRITICAL OF EGYPT'S PRESS CAMPAIGN AGAINST ISRAEL AND RAPPED THE GOI FOR SENDING BULLDOZERS INTO THE SINAI WHILE TALKS WERE IN PROGRESS AND FOR ENGENDERING SO MUCH UNWARRANTED OPTIMISM AMONG THE PUBLIC. HE INSISTED THAT ISRAEL RETAIN PARTS OF THE SINAI (A MERE 2 PERCENT) AS A REQUIREMENT FOR ITS SECURITY. ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE HE SAID JORDAN MUST BE BROUGHT INTO THE NEGOTIATIONS.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 TEL AV 01030 02 OF 02 240220Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 HA-05 SSM-03
TRSE-00 ACDA-12 /091 W
-----113171 240248Z /70

O 240150Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 789
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 TEL AVIV 1030

6. SPEAKING LAST, JUST BEFORE BEGIN'S REBUTTAL, FONMIN DAYAN ARGUED THAT EGYPT WOULD NOT ACCEPT ANYTHING LESS THAN THE RETURN OF ALL OF SINAI. HE DESCRIBED THE US ROLE AS CONSTRUCTIVE AND EFFECTIVE. THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM HE SAID WAS SADAT'S INSISTANCE ON TOTAL WITHDRAWAL ON ALL FRONTS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PALESTINIAN STATE. DAYAN DOUBTED THAT THE WORK OF THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE WOULD BE RESUMED SOON AND IN THE SAME FRAMEWORK BUT INDICATED THE GOI WOULD REACH A DECISION PERMITTING THE MILITARY COMMITTEE TO CONTINUE ITS TALKS.

7. IN HIS SUMMING UP BEGIN STATED THAT ISRAEL WOULD NOT
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 TEL AV 01030 02 OF 02 240220Z

WITHDRAW ITS PEACE PLAN, "AS IT HAS A RIGHT TO DO IF IT IS

REJECTED BY THE OTHER SIDE." EXPRESSING HOPE FOR AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE ATMOSPHERE, BEGIN IMPLIED THAT NEXT SUN-DAYS'S CABINET MEETING MIGHT APPROVE SENDING THE MILITARY COMMITTEE DELEGATION TO CAIRO. HE CONCLUDED WITH THE REMARK THAT IF SADAT PERSISTS IN DEMANDING TOTAL WITHDRAWAL AND A PALESTINIAN STATE "WE WILL INTERPRET THIS AS MEANING THAT HE DOES NOT WANT PEACE WITH ISRAEL BUT RATHER PEACE WITHOUT ISRAEL."

8. COMMENT: BEGIN AVOIDED OPEN CRITICISM OF SADAT AND IN GENERAL DISPLAYED AN EFFORT TO MUTE THE PROVOCATIVE RHETORIC OF RECENT DAYS. IN THE KNESSET RESTAURANT MKS OF ALL POLITICAL SHADES CALLED THE SPEECH DULL AND BACKWARD LOOKING. SEVERAL THOUGHT IT WAS ONE OF BEGIN'S WORST, INDEED, MANY BELIEVED THE ENTIRE DEBATE WAS UNNECESSARY. PERHAPS THE PRIMARY PURPOSE BEHIND BEGIN'S SCHEDULING IT WAS TO REPLY TO SADAT WHILE KEEPING THE DOOR OPEN FOR A RESUMPTION OF TALKS. IN ANY EVENT, THE GENERAL MOOD IN THE KNESSET WAS ONE OF RELIEF THAT BEGIN HAD PASSED UP THE TEMPTATION OF ENTERING A VERBAL SLUG-FEST WITH THE EGYPTIANS. LEWIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETINGS, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, PEACE TALKS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TELAV01030
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780034-0853
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780127/aaaaawqc.tel
Line Count: 190
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ced9a1e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3720658
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KNESSET DEBATES PEACE TALKS
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, IS, EG, XF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ced9a1e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014